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## POLITICS AND PENITENTIARIES

as for males, or 0.9 per 100,000 of population, whereas for the registration area of the United States the female rate was 2.0 per 100,000 of female population."

Mr. Hoffman observes what is obvious to every well-informed person, that such a record brings out in startling contrast the already large and increasing disregard of human life in the United States. The figures which he presents go far toward disproving the truth of the assertion which we sometimes hear that the American people are the most law-abiding in the world, and they seem to confirm the truth of the statement made some years ago by Mr. Andrew D. White, that the United States now leads the world in the amount of crime committed within its borders, unless we except Southern Italy and Sicily. Such a showing is discreditable to us as a people and the problem of how to check this increasing criminality is certainly one of the greatest that confronts our civilization.

JAMES W. GARNER.

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## POLITICS AND PENITENTIARIES.

*Press Dispatch.* "Chicago, December 14, 1912.—Governor-elect Dunne is semi-officially announced to have selected, as chairman of the State Board of Administration of Charities (vice L. Y. Sherman), John Doe, an active member of the Democratic State Central Committee; and, as warden of the State Penitentiary at Joliet (vice E. F. Murphy), Richard Roe, chairman of the Democratic Campaign Committee."

The above is the kind of announcement nowadays to be seen in the newspapers of Illinois, and of other States in which the recently successful party is a different one from the victor at the election of four years ago.

And this is our boasted American civilization! How civilized is this practice of ours! How reasonable! How highly moral! How humane! How practical!

Ten thousand or so people—dependent, defective, delinquent—are under the care of the State of Illinois; a heavy responsibility, needing wisdom, experience, high character, and tried ability for its management. Modern science and philanthropy are doing their best to establish sound principles and to develop efficient methods. The community is struggling to cope with the urgent problems which disease, misfortune and crime force upon it through these inmates of its institutions. The world is growing wiser every day with new and better methods for avoiding the crude blunders of earlier days. A good hope is visible for achieving something which shall justify this generation's boast that it is progressive and civilized. And now——

The chairman of the great state board and warden of the great

## POLICE, GAMBLER, AND JUDGE IN NEW YORK

state penitentiary are to be chosen for their skill and success as *managers of the party's campaign*. The two officers whose power for good is greatest and whose need of professional experience is most urgent are to be selected as a reward for their services in *partisan management*!

Have they any experience in penitentiaries or in public charities? Have they ever devoted any part of their career to that work? Do they know what has been done, what ought not to be done, and what needs to be done? Have they given any test of their ability for such work, or even of their interest in it? These men named in the various dispatches *may* be qualified, for aught we know. But the announcement is that they are to be appointed, *not* because they are or are not qualified, but because they are successful campaign managers, as a reward for party services.

We appoint a bank teller or a factory foreman because he has proved his ability in that career. But we appoint the masters of destiny over our criminals and defectives because of skill in mustering votes.

Faugh! What a sham it is to prate of civilization, where such a practice prevails!

In October, 1910, there was an International Prison Congress in Washington—the first time in America. After their visit the foreign delegates made remarks. They were kindly and generous, but sometimes frank. The one thing they had all noticed was the subservience of penitentiary management in this country to the spoils system of partisan politics.

For our crude senselessness in this matter, we are a laughing-stock to the world.

So be it. We deserve it. The newspaper items of this month prove it anew.

J. H. WIGMORE.

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## THE POLICE, THE GAMBLER, AND THE JUDGE IN NEW YORK CITY.

On the sixteenth of July last, a man was shot in front of a New York City hotel, at two o'clock in the morning in the glare of the burning high white light of Broadway. That man was a gambler—the owner of a gambling-house, better called a den, though in outward aspect a palace in its furnishings and trappings. The gambler had been paying for protection, which, for the uninitiated into the immoral, unclean, unhealthy and unholy ways of city life, I may say, means that he had been bribing the police to blink his unlawful business. Beg pardon of business.